Effect of import of cheaper dairy products on industry

†2867. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the existence of domestic dairy industry is in danger due to import of dairy products at cheaper rates;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are considering to increase import duty on imported dairy products or formulating any other plan, to save the domestic dairy industry; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) This Department has not received any report on 'existence of domestic dairy industry in danger due to import of dairy products at cheaper rates'. Moreover the data on import of Milk and Milk products during last three years shows that there is decline in import of milk products during the last three years.

(c) and (d) In view of (a) and (b) above, there is no proposal to increase import duty on imported dairy under consideration of the Government.

NCF recommendation of farmers loans

†2868. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that National Commission on farmers has recommended in its report to charge four per cent interest on the loans given to farmers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have taken a final decision after considering the said recommendation; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Commission have recommended reduction in rate of interest for crop loans to 4% simple, with Government support, instead of compound rate of interest for arrears.

(c) and (d) The Government have decided to allow the farmers to secure, effective from kharif 2006-07, short-term credit at 7% with an upper limit of Rs. 3,00,000 on the principal amount.

Decreasing agricultural production

2869. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Union Government are aware that as a result of "Law of Diminishing Return" the agriculture production in the country has been decreased tremendously during the last three years;

(b) if so, the States that have suffered heavily as a result thereof, year-wise;

(c) the difference between the estimated and the actual production during that period;

(d) how far the farmers have suffered heavy losses in this regard and how far the prices of agricultural produces have increased during the last three years, year-wise; and

(e) the steps being taken by Union Government to maintain proper agricultural production and its prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) The agricultural production in the country fluctuates mainly because of the abrupt change in whether conditions since about 60% of the net sown area is rain fed in the country. In 2003-04, the foodgrains production reached an all time record level of 213.19 million tonnes so also the production of total oilseeds which reached an all time record level of 25.19 million tonnes. Although, in 2004-05 the production of foodgrains and oilseeds declined *vis-a-vis* record production in the previous year, the production of cotton reached an all time record level of 16.43 million bales of 170 kgs. each. In 2005-06, as per the 3rd advance estimates the production of soyabean and sunflower are expected to reach record levels of 8.36 million tonnes and 1.43 million tonnes respectively. As a consequence, the production of total nine oilseeds is also expected to reach a record level of 26.70 million tonnes. Sugarcane